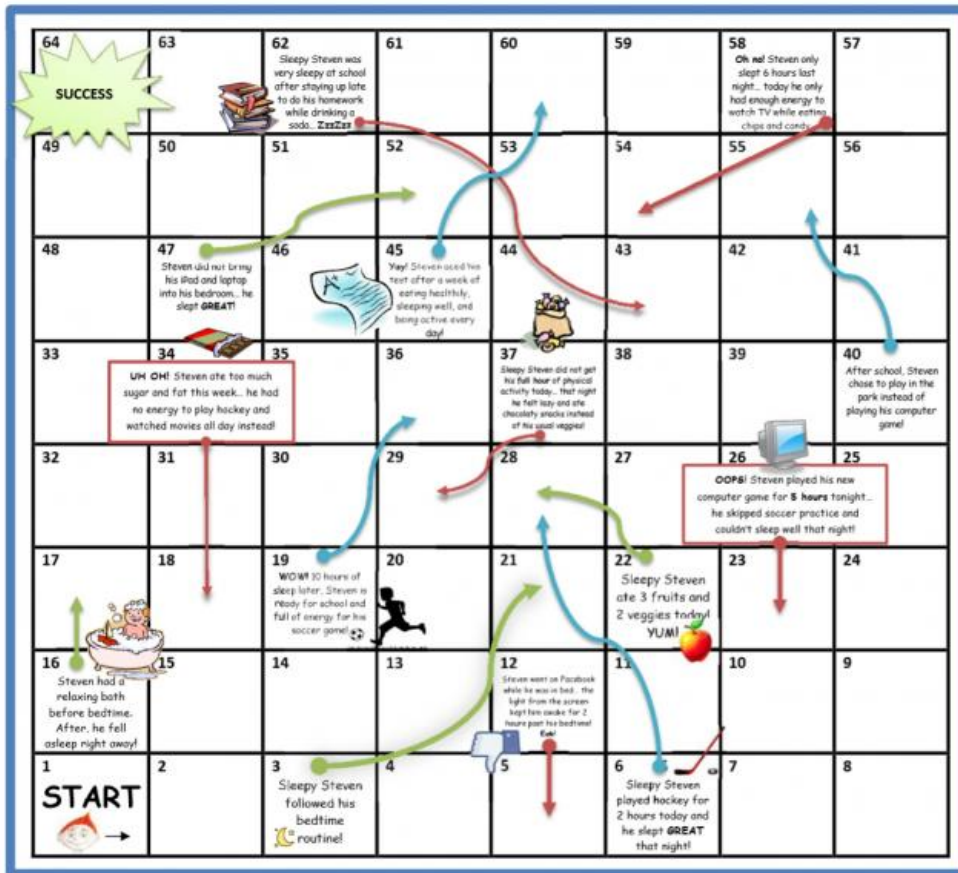


# Small increases in sleep improve grades

April 5 2016, by Cynthia Lee



**Sleepy Steven's Path to Success!**



Elementary school-age children who improved their sleep habits also improved in their academic performance, according to a study by researchers at McGill University and the Douglas Mental Health

University Institute in partnership with the Riverside School Board in Montreal.

Using a collaborative approach, called Community-based Participatory Research (CBPR), the team developed a program in conjunction with educators using experiential learning to provide students with competencies needed for real-world success by addressing real-world problems and situations through teacher directed and facilitated learning. "We found that cumulative average extension of five nights  $\times$  18.2 min = 91 min in total had a significant impact on [report card](#) grades", says McGill professor and lead researcher Reut Gruber.

## **The method**

Six interactive classes, two hour sessions, given over a six-week period, were offered during school time by the students' homeroom teachers.

Gruber's research team, in collaboration with Gail Somerville from Riverside School Board in Saint-Hubert, Quebec, studied 74 healthy children between 7 and 11 years of age.

## **Selected materials**

### **Teacher Activity**

Materials were tailored to the child's level, for example, here is a video for the Cycle 1 (Grades 1 and 2) group:

Parents attached the actiwatch to the child's non-dominant wrist at bedtime for four weeknights and provided their child's most recent report card. They kept a diary of their child's daily bedtime and wake

time (sleep log) during the same period.

## Worth the effort

Participation in the program yielded improvements in sleep and report card grades. Specifically, participation in the intervention was associated with improved [grades](#) in English and mathematics.

## The takeaway for parents

- Small cumulative sleep extension may lead to improved academic performance
- Parents are advised to ensure their children get sufficient amount of [healthy sleep](#) every night.

## The takeaway for schools

- Re-evaluate how to encourage integration of [sleep](#) education programs to the health curriculum

Provided by McGill University

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